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FM AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1125
INFO RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
RUCNCLS/SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 0284
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 0021
RHMFIUU/HQ USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUEKJCS/DIA WASHDC 0094
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC 0187

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SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR INL (BUHLER)
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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SNAR](#) [TI](#)

SUBJECT: CONCRETE STEPS TO CROSS THE BORDER

¶1. (SBU) Summary: Ambassador, DCM, and INL Officer attended the EU/OSCE/UNODC-organized Ministerial Conference on Border Management and Drug Control in Central Asia held in Tajikistan October 21-22. The Conference was organizationally challenged and results were meager. For the United States, the silver lining in the conference cloud was President Rahmon's speech where he specifically advocated for joint Tajik-Afghan law enforcement training. First Deputy of the Committee for National Security (ex-KGB) reversing early obduracy on this issue told the Ambassador on the conference margins that he was looking forward to Tajik-Afghan collaboration in this area. Drug Control Agency chief General Rustam Nazarov and Afghan Deputy Minister for Counter-Narcotics told INL officer that their agencies stood ready to participate in joint training. Embassy Dushanbe is taking advantage of the opening and has reached out to Embassy Kabul and PRT Kunduz to nail down next steps. End summary.

MISTEPS BUT...

¶2. (SBU) Given the administrative scramble to pull together the Ministerial Conference on Border Management and Drug Control in Central Asia in Dushanbe on October 21-22 we did not have high expectations of a meaty outcome, and we were not disappointed. Frenetic 11th hour phone calls to add U.S. names to the registration list, snafu's with vehicle entrance to the Presidential Dacha, and the failure of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to give credit to the United States for being the largest donor to border programs in Tajikistan all were emblematic of the overall conference. Too many cooks seem to have scorched the conference broth. The UN promised to pay closer attention in the future. We told them the next pledge letter would contain conditions on recognition of U.S. assistance when advertising projects to which we have contributed.

NEW OPENINGS

¶3. (SBU) President Rahmon's opening speech was worth the conference headaches however. While dinging international donors for insufficient coordination, he specifically agreed to joint Tajik-Afghan law enforcement training. (Note. We assess that donors do a remarkable, although not perfect, job of coordinating on provision of assistance given the limitations of the border and law enforcement services to provide liaison support. As an example, the Border Guards International Department has nine billets and only four are

filled, considerably slowing down donor engagement. End Note.) Rahmon's remarks were echoed in Ambassador Jacobson's side-bar conversation with First Deputy of the Committee for National Security, Kasim Gafarov. Gafarov, warmly echoing Rahmon's thoughts, seems to have developed new interest in joint training with Afghans. He told the Ambassador that he welcomed meetings to discuss specific events and venues. He reiterated his interest to INL officer during a subsequent walkthrough of an on-going project to create an intelligence analytical center in the Committee's training academy, noting that he needed to find barracks space for expected Afghan students.

¶4. (SBU) Conference attendees General Rustam Nazarov and Deputy Counter-Narcotics Minister in Afghanistan, General Daud, favorably received an INL Officer suggestion to hold QDaud, favorably received an INL Officer suggestion to hold discrete high-level counter-narcotics discussions to chart out joint training opportunities. The Tajik drug agency already has a collaborative relationship with Afghan counterparts with liaison officers working from northern Afghanistan cities.

NEXT STEPS

¶5. (SBU): We will use the opening provided by Rahmon, Gafarov, and Nazarov to nail down concrete next steps on joint training perhaps using the U.S.-financed border training center in Khorog. We also are using the commitment to leverage improved operating modalities on the U.S.-built Nizhniy Pyanj/Sher Khan Bandar Bridge.

DUSHANBE 00001379 002 OF 002

¶6. (SBU) INL Dushanbe has reached out to Embassy Kabul (Pol Section, INL, BTMF, and CSTC-A) to begin planning joint confidence building security measures and proposed an initial meeting in Kunduz.

¶7. (SBU) Dushanbe,s Office of Defense Cooperation has been in contact with the PRT Kunduz to move forward on improved bridge operations and training for both Afghan and Tajik border guards and customs officers with a meeting scheduled for the end of November.

¶8. (SBU) Comment: The Tajik bureaucracy can be incredibly obstructionist so Rahmon,s speech notwithstanding all is not smooth sailing. Given the President,s interest though we assess that we will achieve some results. We will use next week,s visit of DAS Krol to drive home the point.

JACOBSON